DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 227 327 CE 035 406

AUTHOR Bailin, Michael A.
TITLE The California Conservation Corps: A Case Study. Working Paper #5. The State Youth Initiatives Project.
INSTITUTION Public/Private Ventures, Philadelphia, PA.
SPONS AGENCY Mott (C.S.) Foundation, Flint, Mich.
PUB DATE Dec 82
NOTE 41p.; For related documents, see CE 035 404-405.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Career Development; Case Studies; *Conservation (Environment); Disadvantaged Youth; Employment Potential; Employment Programs; Job Development; Job Skills; *Job Training; Participant Characteristics; Policy Formation; Program Costs; *Program Effectiveness; Program Implementation; *State Programs; Statewide Planning; Young Adults; *Youth Employment; *Youth Programs
IDENTIFIERS *California Conservation Corps

ABSTRACT

Through site visits, a case study was made of the California Conservation Corps (CCC) in order to provide a description of its history, objectives, program features, participants, funding patterns, future plans, and key issues scheduled to be addressed by the program. Descended from similar earlier programs, the CCC was established in 1976. After several years of drifting, the program was shaped up by a new director, B.T. Collins, who established its remaining principles and style that impressed its members, legislators, and the public. The CCC was established to maintain and develop the state's natural resources while providing work and training to its 18- through 23-year-old members. Work performed by the CCC includes firefighting, conservation, public facilities construction, developing parklands, and cleaning up environmental pollutants such as oil spills. Evaluation of the CCC shows it to have a strong positive impact on the youth who are involved in it as well as a useful role in preserving the state's resources. Of concern is the dropout rate, which is 35 to 40 percent; however, such a dropout rate is not unusual in programs of this kind, such as the Army. The CCC is now beginning to emphasize career and job development along with work attitudes, skills, and public works. Overall, the CCC is a productive, well-run program that deserves support and duplication by other states. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED227327

Public/Private Ventures
1701 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 564-4815

The State Youth Initiatives Project

Working Paper #5

The California Conservation Corps: A Case Study

by Michael A. Bailin

December 1982

CE035406

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

M L Pritchard

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

The research for this case study was made possible by a grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. The author gratefully acknowledges the counsel and editorial assistance of Natalie Jaffe and the research assistance of David Lah.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
INTRODUCTION		1
I.	SOME HISTORY	4
	Funding and Costs	6
	Goals and Objectives	6
II.	THE WORK	9
III.	THE PROCESS AND THE PROGRAM	13
	Joining Up	13
	Training Academy	14
	The Centers	14
	The Work Day	15
IV.	THE CORPSMEMBERS	17
	P/PV Survey	17
	Retention and Attrition	19
	Youth Leadership Development	20
V.	ADMINISTRATION	22
	Future Administrative Issues	24
VI.	THE CCC VIS-A-VIS OTHER YOUTH CONSERVATION PROGRAMS	25
VII.	THE IMPACT	27
	Impact on Youth	27
	Economic Impact	27
VIII.	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	29
APPENDIX - CHARACTERISTICS OF CCC ENTRANTS, FALL 1982		32

INTRODUCTION

This study of the California Conservation Corps is one of a series of publications sponsored by P/PV's Information Center on State Youth Initiatives, funded by a grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. The series is intended to help meet the need for information as state policymakers begin to respond to recently-enacted federal legislation that shifts many youth education, employment and training responsibilities to states.

The California Conservation Corps (CCC) was chosen for study for a variety of reasons:

First, and foremost, the CCC is reputedly a program that works -- in the sense of attracting the enthusiastic support of diverse constituencies: enrollees, the public and state funding sources. Even as federal funds for part of the CCC program terminated and state funds for other agencies were being slashed, CCC prospered and grew. After five years of reviewing and researching youth programs, P/PV has identified few that work well on such a substantial scale. We, therefore, felt it deserved a closer look.

Second, the CCC has attracted national attention as a possible model for an American Conservation Corps and/or a National Youth Service and, more recently, has been seen as providing elements suitable for a new "attack" on youth unemployment. A bill (HR4861) establishing an American Conservation Corps has already passed the House of Representatives by a decisive margin, and the Senate bill (S2061) was ready for a vote in December. The purpose of this legislation -- to "provide employment and training for young men and women...in projects accomplishing the conservation, rehabilitation and improvement of natural and cultural resources located on public... lands," echoes the goals of the CCC.

Legislators and policymakers also show interest from time to time in the establishment of a National Youth Service, which would pursue multiple goals: an alternative to military service, a chance for youth to put back into society something of what they have been given, an answer to high youth unemployment and drop-out rates, and a labor force for the repair and maintenance of the nation's public facilities.

The CCC is often cited as a plausible model for both these national programs, despite the fact that neither a full-scale program description nor an assessment of program impact exists.

Third, the CCC was selected as an obvious candidate in a series of case studies focusing on the state role in youth employment programs. This focus has been sharpened, of course, by the passsage of the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982, with its

orientation toward state-administered activities. But, for many states, the idea of youth conservation programs has maintained a momentum since the demise of the national Young Adult Conservation Corps in 1981. Twenty-one states either have, or are considering establishment of, a youth conservation program of their own.

In addition to California, four states (Connecticut, Iowa, Minnesota and Ohio) and the Tennessee Valley Authority have year-round youth conservation programs. Six states ran summer programs, some with CETA funds, in 1982: Alaska, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maine and Pennsylvania. The Maryland legislature passed but did not fund legislation this year and five states (Arkansas, Florida, New York, Virginia and Wisconsin) have prepared legislative proposals for consideration. In five states (New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas and Washington) active consideration is being given to developing legislation.

And finally, the California Conservation Corps includes program elements that remain controversial as policy-makers consider effective approaches to the reduction of youth unemployment. CCC leaders consider both the residential and the non-targeted nature of the program as crucial to its success. In terms both of cost and of effective uses of public funds, these are issues that deserve scrutiny.

The P/PV study of the California Conservation Corps was carried out during two three-day visits to CCC headquarters in Sacramento, to the training academy, and to a small number of CCC work sites and centers during August and September 1982. The site visits included attendance at staff and corpsmember meetings. Additional information was gathered from a great deal of printed material produced by CCC, including in-house memos and reports; an analysis of a P/PV questionnaire completed by trainees entering the program in September, October, and November 1982; and from a number of informal discussions and personal interviews with CCC staff, corpsmembers, and others familiar with the program.

This activity makes possible a fairly detailed description of CCC's history, objectives, program features, participants, funding patterns, future plans and key issues scheduled to be addressed by the program. It does not make possible a documented assessment of the Corps' contribution to the future lives and livelihoods of its members, or of its present potential as a model for national or state programs in terms of cost or programmatic effectiveness. Such conclusions must await the results of a quantitative research project currently under consideration by the CCC.

However, the impressions of the author of this report are highly positive. In six years of studying youth programs, few have made such a strong impression of clear and constructive goals, creative and energetic management, obvious social utility, visible impact on participants, and enthusiastic public support.

As a youth development program, the CCC certainly is a program that works. Conclusions about whether it is also an employment and training program that works and should or could be replicated on a larger scale must be the subject of a later report.

I. SOME HISTORY

The CCC's ancestry traces to the Civilian Conservation Corps, which was created by the Roosevelt administration during the Depression and continued through 1945. Its own history dates back to the California Ecology Corps, established by then Governor Reagan in 1971 as an alternative service program for conscientious objectors to the Vietnam War. Ecology Corpsmembers -- who never numbered more than about 100 conscientious objectors and several hundred young people hired from localities near the Centers -- worked at fire centers operated by the California Division of Forestry.

In 1976, Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., abolished the Ecology Corps and established the more broadly-based California Conservation Corps, which was to include its predecessor's functions. The legislature approved establishment of the CCC for a trial five-year period with a first-year budget of $5 million.

The CCC's first director was Boyd Horner, a lawyer, mystic, and philosopher; a visionary with an unorthodox managerial style. His enthusiasm, however, produced little progress and, after one year, Governor Brown replaced Horner with Leroy Chatfield, a former seminarian and an organizer for the United Farm Workers. Chatfield opened 18 CCC centers in less than two years, but in the process of rapid growth he politicized the program and neglected to develop careful administration. The result was a rash of charges of mismanagement, alleged favoritism in hiring and high drug use.

In Spring 1979, with the legislature about to close down the CCC a year ahead of its authorized term, Governor Brown appointed B.T. Collins, his deputy legislative lobbyist, as CCC director. The Los Angeles Times described the new director (July 23, 1981) as:

"an American original, a 40-year-old ex-Green Beret .... variously described as candid, irreverent, blustery, perceptive, foul-mouthed and devastatingly charming."

Mr. Collins, with a mandate from the governor, a strong sense of the discipline necessary for organizational growth and accomplishment and a great deal of political savvy, revolutionized the Corps. He moved out the poor administrators and insisted the good ones remain. He established rules and procedures for corpsmembers and staff that are a model of good management. He developed a program that garnered enthusiastic support from participants and the public alike, and particularly from legislators, all of whose districts get a great deal of visible work done by the Corps. And he set a tone that the program still sounds today.

The tone is embodied in what is remembered as Mr. Collins' "Hitler speech" to new recruits in 1979:

"I do not care about you. I am not concerned with your happiness. I am concerned with the expenditure of taxpayers' dollars. I know I'm going to work you to death. And I know you're going to work hard or I'll fire you."

He also established the Corps' five basic rules:

"No booze. No dope. No violence. No destruction of state property. No refusal to work." Violation of any rule is grounds for dismissal.

He coined the Corps' motto: "Hard work, low pay, miserable conditions."

He drafted the "nasty letter" that all new corpsmembers are required to sign, agreeing to "do dirty, back-breaking work in rain, high winds, intense heat, snow, mud and cold mountain streams."

Principally because of Mr. Collins' management and influence, the Corps flourished. It developed a reputation for high productivity and professionalism; and, in March 1980, the legislature extended the life of the CCC through December 31, 1985.

In October, 1981, Mr. Collins returned to Governor Brown's staff and was succeeded by John E. Dugan, another New York Irishman, who had been with the Corps since its founding, most recently as Mr. Collins' deputy. An ex-New York City cop and much-decorated Army career officer, Mr. Dugan continues the tradition, but with a few differences.

With a program that has reached maturity and proved itself productive to the people of California, Mr. Dugan and his chief deputy, Robert J. Burkhardt, Jr. have moved the program forward in ways geared to meet the educational and developmental needs of its young people. While an emphasis on hard work and low pay still characterize the program, "miserable conditions" are not de rigueur if, while still adhering to the CCC's goals, those conditions can be ameliorated. An additional motto has become "character, competence, cooperation." Mr. Dugan's view of corpsmembers is illustrated by this excerpt from his introduction to the CCC's 1981 Annual Report:

"Our young people want a challenge. They are refusing to remain mired in an age of use and abuse where the takers outnumber the givers. They want to work, to be responsible, and to give of themselves so that future generations may have what too many of us have taken for granted. The CCC gives them the opportunity to do this -- to be productive, and to gain a real sense of accomplish-

ment. I proudly submit this report of achievement on behalf of the finest civil servants and the hardest-working youth in the state."

Funding and Costs

The Corps' funding history illustrates the program's success. Starting with an allocation from the state of $5 million in 1976-77 the CCC budget has grown to $38.1 million in the Corp's fiscal year July 1982-June 1983. Between 1978 and 1981, the program received federal funds from the year-round Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC), but that funding never amounted to more than 20 percent of the total CCC budget. When federal funds for YACC terminated in 1981, state funds largely made up the loss. But 1981-82 was a year for two percent across-the-board cuts for all California state agencies, following the delayed impact from Proposition 13. As a result, the budget CCC had planned for the year was reduced, one of its centers had to be closed, and plans for expansion were delayed.

The 1981-82 budget of 37.1 million was offset by $2.8 million in corpsmember payments for meals and lodging. With an average enrollment of corpsmembers of 1,701 during 1981-82, the average per-corpsmember year cost worked out to $20,160. Considering that the average corpsmember remained in the program for 5.2 months, the average cost per participant was $8736 in 1981-82. Plans for expansion have now been revived, aiming for an average enrollment of 2,420 corpsmembers in 1983-84, and projecting an average annual cost per corpsmember of $19,237.

Forty percent of the budget is spent on corpsmember salaries, 25 percent on staff support and 35 percent on facilities and equipment.

Goals and Objectives

The 1976 state legislation established the CCC in the Department of Resources to "engage in projects for conserving, improving, or developing natural resources and preserving the environment."

The law defined the Corps' objectives as follows:

- "to further the development and maintenance of the natural resources and environment of this state by the young men and women of this state,
- "to benefit them by providing meaningful educational and work opportunities,
- "to devote available resources of the state to providing on-the-job training to such persons so that they may acquire employable skills, experience and knowledge,

- "and to benefit the public by accomplishing useful and needed public works projects."

The law defined appropriate work projects, both urban and rural, as those that offer environmental and natural resource benefits, provide opportunities for public use, and contain on-the-job training value. Fire prevention, fire suppression and disaster relief were designated as major emphases.

The 1976 legislation concludes: "The projects to be undertaken pursuant to this act will contribute to the reduction of the widespread unemployment presently existing in the state, while at the same time providing needed public improvements and job training," language with a distinctly contemporary ring.

The 1980 legislation, which extended the Corps for five more years, included greater specificity about the nature of CCC projects and inserted a requirement indicating that employment in addition to training should be an objective. The new legislation required the Corps, "in conjunction with the Employment Development Department, to develop plans to assist corpsmembers in obtaining employment following their participation in the corps program."

Possible CCC projects were defined as those that:

- Preserve, maintain and enhance environmentally important lands and waters;
- Accomplish useful and needed public works projects in both urban and rural areas;
- Conserve, maintain, improve and develop natural resources in both urban and rural areas;
- Provide opportunities for public use of the areas, projects and resources described above;
- Assist in emergency operations, such as natural disaster relief and the rescue of lost and injured persons;
- Assist in fire prevention and suppression;
- Directly contribute to the conservation of energy;
- Contribute toward making public facilities accessible to persons with disabilities;
- Assist in developing, rehabilitating and restoring parklands, recreational facilities and historical resources; restoring salmon and steelhead spawning, nursery and rearing habitat; restoring and preserv-

ing wildlife habitat; and enhancing reforestation in both urban and rural areas.

In the implementation of this legislation, its goals have, of course, been interpreted and refined by the human beings responsible for implementation.

Mr. Collins' objective was to do everything possible to get the work done, done well, and, in the course of so doing, to inculcate principles of professionalism, self-discipline and cooperation among corpsmembers. These objectives are also Mr. Dugan's, as he builds on the stability his predecessor brought to the Corps. But Mr. Dugan adds more attention to the educational and employment opportunities that can be engendered by CCC experience, emphasizes its contribution to the building of racial tolerance, and has sought to open the CCC further to increasing numbers of young women and handicapped youths. His chief deputy, Robert J. Burkhardt, Jr., says the CCC's goal is to provide a disciplined work force for the state of California, and to develop the corpsmembers' potential for leadership.

All three CCC leaders have seen the enhancement of post-program employment prospects as only one of the many products of the Corps' program, not as its primary mission. However, with the increased stability of the program, and the mandate in the 1980 legislation, more emphasis is being placed on all aspects of "Career Development," in ways that will be discussed later in this report.

II. THE WORK

CCC work is, in general, similar to that performed by the original Civilian Conservation Corps and relies primarily on the muscle and endurance of corpsmembers. Its first priority is to respond to emergencies and help during disasters. Its on-going work, which is interrupted in emergencies, includes conservation and environmental protection activities, plus the more technical and higher-skill conservation work whose development was a special interest of Governor Brown. Urban public works have come in for an increasing share of CCC work during the past several years. Between on-site assignments, corpsmembers work on the maintenance and improvement of CCC facilities, though the time so spent is currently being reduced in favor of more visible public work.

Meticulous records of work value and hours are logged for all assignments and all corpsmembers. Based on those records, the Corps' Annual Report involving the 1981 calendar year describes the year's activity in detail. The following is a summary of that report:

Working closely with the California Department of Forestry, the Department of Fish and Game, the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Department of Corrections, Community Action Project Agencies, the U.S. Coast Guard and other agencies, a monthly average of 1758 CCC men and women did a total of 3.2 million hours of work in 1981, a year dramatized by the Mediterranean fruit fly infestation and a busy fire season. Otherwise, the year was typical. Projects included the following:

- More than 2,700 tons of fruit and vegetables were stripped from 100,269 properties in the state's two-month attempt to arrest the spread of the Medfly.

- Firefighting crews controlled 111 forest and grassland fires. Resource Protection Trainees worked on reducing potential fire hazards through controlled burns, community fire prevention programs and vegetation management.

- A one-hundred barrel oil spill was cleaned out of five miles of creek bed in San Luis Obispo to safeguard fish and other wildlife.

- Three million trees were planted for timber production, several tons of seed cones were collected to replenish the state's seed bank, and conifer seedlings were grown and supplied to the U.S. Forest Service.

- Fish and wildlife protection activities included unclogging 100 miles of logjammed streams to open

spawning areas, rescue landlocked young fish and restore rearing ponds; tagging thousands of salmon, renovating fish hatcheries, planting natural vegetation on stream banks to control erosion; rescuing deer trapped in water canal systems, restoring habitat for endangered species, modifying range fencing and fencing marshland for nesting.

- Conservation and development of parks and recreational areas included the completion of half a million dollars worth of work in creating a new regional park in San Bernardino County, making improvements to the state park on Angel Island, contributing to work on two other state parks, developing a variety of urban downtown parks, and increasing access to parks for disabled persons.

- Corpsmembers worked on the construction of 140 miles of trails in three national parks, developed campgrounds and worked on segments of the Pacific Crest Trail.

- Substantial work was done in communities affected by severe fire damage in 1980, including construction of water and mud-diversion devices, repair of flood facilities, clearing of drainage ditches, revegetation of eroded foothills.

- The Corps' Solar Program installed 133 solar panels at 11 sites for three state agencies, and the Energy Conservation Program worked on energy audits and retrofit measures for CCC facilities.

- Corpsmembers participated in the building of roads, walkways, small bridges, rock walls, traffic tunnels and a new schoolhouse for the mountain village of Fallsvale.

Table I, also from the 1981 Annual Report, displays the major categories of work, the time spent and the proportion of each to the total during the last fiscal year and the life of the program. About one-quarter of corpsmembers' work hours have been spent on the maintenance and operation of CCC facilities and operations; 19 percent on conservation, rehabilitation and construction work; 16 percent responding to emergencies, largely fire, flood, and pest control; and 10 percent on park development.

The spirit in which the work is done is well characterized by the following letter from the manager of the pipeline company that suffered the oil spill. His October 1982 letter to Mr. Collins is reprinted in the 1981 Annual report:

"The corpsmembers worked diligently and eagerly for long hours under hot sun as individual rocks were cleaned and debris

TABLE I

CALIFORNIA CONSERVATION CORPS
PUBLIC SERVICE CONSERVATION WORK

	7/1/81 to 6/30/82 FY 1982		7/1/76 to 6/30/82 FY 1976-82	
	Hours	Percentages	Hours	Percentages
EMERGENCIES	494,252	17	2,083,887	16
FISH/WILDLIFE CONSERVATION	126,428	4	459,153	4
REFORESTATION AND FOREST IMPROVEMENT	140,843	5	1,153,633	9
PARK AND RECREATION DEVELOPMENT	321,623	11	1,332,938	10
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION	96,982	3	560,545	4
FIRE HAZARD REDUCTION	131,309	4	747,221	6
SOLAR-ENERGY CONSERVATION	48,915	2	125,481	1
CONSERVATION PROJECTS FOR DISABLED	17,458	1	88,133	1
CONSERVATION, REHABILITATION AND CONSTRUCTION	637,469	21	2,465,449	19
ENERGY AND SAFETY TRAINING	263,337	9	713,650	5
PROGRAM SUPPORT	672,751	23	3,243,363	25

1981/1982 FISCAL YEAR CORPSMEMBER HOURS

TOTAL: 2,951,367 100%
=1686.5 PEOPLE
WORKING 40-HOUR WEEK

1976/1982 STAFF AND CORPSMEMBER HOURS

GRAND TOTAL: 12,973,453 100%

was removed from the creek bed. Equally impressive was the desire to learn about ecology and preservation of natural habitats. Company personnel on scene reported that corpsmembers were well supervised, courteous, safety conscious, and seemed mature beyond their years while working at very high output levels. The end result of this endeavor was a creek which was cleaner than it had been for years."

Individual work projects are chosen by center directors largely on the basis of simple criteria: the projects must benefit the public, provide opportunities for corpsmember education and skills training, not compete with unionized work and leave a visible record of the Corps' contribution to the community. Work sponsors -- municipal, state, federal and non-profit entities -- must be able to supply on schedule technical supervision and know-how, and the necessary materials and supplies. Work site sponsors are also asked to provide corpsmembers with useful afterhours learning opportunities. However, CCC officials have consistently resisted suggestions that they enter into reimbursement contracts with sponsors to fund CCC salaries and major expenses, on the ground that such contracting would dilute CCC's total authority for the program and cause CCC to lose its firm control over the process.

III. THE PROCESS AND THE PROGRAM

To join the Corps, an applicant must be 18 to 23 years old, a California resident, willing to work, and neither on probation nor parole. He/she must have a record of a complete physical examination, performed at the applicant's expense, and must register to vote. Period. No other requirements exist. Educational level, income and employment status are not considered.

Joining Up

New recruits for CCC's residential centers come, generally, by referral from the Employment Service offices around the state, each of which has a certain monthly allotment of CCC openings. The waiting list averages about 1500 names and it is not uncommon for an applicant to wait six-to-eight months for enrollment. Recruitment for the few non-residential centers is handled by Center staff locally.

Special efforts are made to recruit women and handicapped youths, but recruitment of other youth is not difficult as they respond in substantial numbers to the Corps' skillful use of the media and public relations in achieving high visibility for CCC life and work.

Upon acceptance, each recruit attends a one-day induction session at CCC headquarters in Sacramento at which time she/he fills out a number of forms, is measured for uniforms, and studies and signs a contract that sets forth the CCC basics. The signature commits the recruit to the following:

- Conformity to the Corpsmember Rules of Behavior: No Drugs, No Booze, No Violence, No Refusal to Work, No Destruction of State Property. Violation of any of these rules is grounds for dismissal.

- Agreement to work 40 hours a week at the minimum wage -- $581 a month in 1981 -- from which $145 a month is withheld for room and meals, $10 a month for health benefits and $1.30 for life insurance. Overtime pay or compensatory time off, both at time and a half, are authorized for work over eight hours a day on "officially declared disasters." The contract provides for two weeks paid vacation, authorized sick leave and state holidays.

The recruit also countersigns a letter from the CCC director "indicating that you understand the CCC's expectations." The expectations declared in this so-called "nasty letter" include the following:

"You will do dirty, backbreaking work; and no one will thank you for it...The CCC is not a summer camp. The CCC is not a job-

skills training program. The most important skill you will learn is how to work hard...you will live in close quarters with all kinds of people...If you don't like people of different colors, if you don't like the disabled, then you don't want to be in the CCC...You must accept supervision. You must follow instructions."

Training Academy

The Academy, located in Calaveras County near San Andreas, provides new recruits with a three-week introduction to the CCC philosophy of "hard work, low pay, miserable conditions."

The schedule runs seven days a week, each day beginning at 5:30 AM with rigorous physical exercise. Corpsmembers are trained in safe tool use, first aid, water safety, fire training and flood control during the eight-hour day. Evening sessions introduce the rules, center project work, policies of center life, the centers' educational and career development programs, and opportunities for promotion within the Corps.

Although Academy costs are high, (they comprise over 6.5% of CCC's annual budget), CCC officials feel that it provides an efficient way to systematize basic orientation and necessary training. It also enables the CCC to introduce important changes in program direction to an entire corps population as they occur. A few CCC officials feel that this orientation might be accomplished as efficiently and more cheaply by individual centers. But the Academy would appear to be a highly regarded and permanent component of the CCC program.

The Academy also provides training to corpsmembers who are promoted to "Supergrades" in the course of their CCC careers. (see below).

The Centers

The CCC's 26 centers include 23 residential centers and three non-residential centers in urban areas. These centers are spread across the entire state and serve as the base of operations from which the CCC workforce is assigned to projects and prepares to meet emergencies on an around-the-clock basis. Of the 23 residential centers, also called base centers, eight, mainly in Northern California, are fire centers for which the CCC and the Department of Forestry have joint responsibility; and three are specialty centers: one concentrates on energy conservation work, one specializes in installing solar panels, and one (Project 201) serves as the base for crews that clear streams in Northern California.

From the Training Academy, new corpsmembers are assigned to centers as needed, without regard to corpsmember preference, although transfer may be requested after four months. Each center accommodates 60-80 corpsmembers who are formed into crews of 10 to 15 members each. Men and women are assigned and treated equally, but residential dormitory facilities are separate.

Center accommodations are spare and barracks-like, but appear tidy and functional. Several have been rented by the CCC for $1 a year from state agencies, the U.S. Army and other public agencies, and have been substantially upgraded by CCC crews.

The 26 centers are consistent in their reflection of the CCC's purpose, philosophy and program components. But they vary quite remarkably as they reflect their different locations, habitual assignments and, especially, the personalities and managerial styles of their directors.

The Work Day

Corpsmembers put in a no-nonsense, eight-hour day, observing the Corps' five affirmatives: do high quality work, learn useful skills, build your vocabulary, share your skills, practice conservation.

Corpsmembers rise at 5:30 AM in order to dress, perform mandatory exercise, clean up their quarters, breakfast, make their lunches and arrive at the work site at 8 AM. (CCC uniforms include brown cotton pants and khaki shirts, and work boots. The only variation is in the color of the hard hat, which denotes rank in the program). Some corpsmembers are assigned to work at the center on maintenance, repair and such specialized functions as cooking, gardening and equipment maintenance.

Evenings and weekends, corpsmembers are free to leave camp, but regular participation in classes, workshops and other educational activities is required.

Literacy is a major and increasing emphasis. Corpsmembers who read and write below 6th grade level are expected to study and improve by two grade levels during their CCC career. Those without a high school diploma are expected to study for and pass the GED examination. Those who have finished high school are expected to take useful courses or prepare for entrance into four-year or community college. The Corps' "Each One Teach One" philosophy is consciously activated for the literacy program, in which corpsmembers with more education are expected to help those with less.

In addition, "Everyone Writes, Every Day" was added to the Corps' requirements in 1981. The daily writing task may be a diary, letters home, center newspapers, resumes, project reports and evaluations, skills inventories, requests for vacation -- anything that can develop the writing habit and improve corpsmember skills. Staff review writing assignments and are expected to help the corpsmembers progress.

Lectures by experts on any aspect of the work corpsmembers do are common evening activities. Subjects include ecology, wildlife and fish protection, fire-fighting techniques, storm damage control, pollution control, forestry development, the needs of the

disabled, and so on. Project sponsors are expected to make presentations germane to the work underway.

A new emphasis, which has been slowly increasing since 1980, is career development. During evening workshops, corpsmembers work on a Career Development Program, exploring their skills and interests for potential employment, learning about jobs available in their areas of interest, practicing filling out job applications and interviewing for jobs. As a result of increasing job development activities on the part of Sacramento staff and center directors, corpsmembers receive weekly notices of employment opportunities in their area as well as reports from former corpsmembers who have obtained jobs following their CCC experience.

IV. THE CORPSMEMBERS

During calendar 1981, the average monthly work force was 1,758, with a waiting list standing at all times. About 325 new corpsmembers are hired each month (more during the fire season) to fill the places of those who drop out, at a rate of about 15 percent monthly. The average length of stay was 5.2 months in calendar 1981, with 19 percent graduating after a full year in the Corps. A total of 35 to 40 percent leave for a variety of positive reasons: graduation, a job, enrollment in school or in the military.

The ethnic diversity of the CCC population reflects that of the state of California, whose labor force is about 74 white, 6 percent black, 14 percent Hispanic and 4 percent other. The CCC population in 1981 included 66 percent whites, 15 percent each of blacks and Hispanics and 4 percent other.

The proportion of female corpsmembers has been steadily rising, as a result of concentrated recruitment efforts, to 32 percent in 1981. The goal is 50 percent. Special recruitment efforts have also been made to attract disabled persons, who were 4.5 percent of corpsmembers in 1981. Disabilities include epilepsy, deafness, blindness and cerebral palsy.

A CCC study in 1981 found that 62 percent of corpsmembers came from metropolitan areas, 51 percent were between 19 and 21 years old, 54 percent had a high school diploma and 11 percent had attended some years of college.

The diversity of the corpsmembers is a matter of principle considered vital to the CCC's success, according to all its officials and staff. They define the Corps' non-targeted population as beneficial for a variety of reasons:

- it does not brand the participants as "losers" or the staff as "saviors," both labels being considered pernicious in terms of program success;
- it makes the "each one teach one" orientation of cooperative effort a reality, since the population includes a breadth of experience that makes sharing profitable to all;
- it engenders racial, ethnic and sexual tolerance, respect and understanding.

P/PV Survey

Since the program is consciously non-targeted, the Corps does not routinely collect information that affords a socio-economic profile of the corpsmembers. Nevertheless, that profile is of particular interest to persons considering possible replication of

the model. For this reason, P/PV devised a questionnaire that was administered to incoming corpsmembers during the months of September - November 1982. The total sample size of the survey was 830 out of 862 entering corpsmembers. Results of the survey are summarized here. Detailed tables of survey responses are presented in the Appendix. Note that the actual sample size varies from item to item because of nonresponse to certain questions.

The results of the intake survey suggest that entering corpsmembers do not, for the most part, come from the pre-college population. Only 44% of the youths had a regular high school degree, 11% had a G.E.D., and 45% had neither. Only 17% of the youths came from the academic curriculum in high school; 66% came from the general curriculum. (Previous educational research has shown that 80 percent of high school dropouts come from the general curriculum.) Only 3% of the youths reported having an A average in high school; 35% reported having a C average or lower.

Most entering corpsmembers in the three-month study had poor recent job opportunities: 11 percent listed no pre-program job experience and 25 percent reported that they had not worked for six months or more. Almost one-third of the youths had pre-program jobs that paid the minimum wage or lower and only 21% of entering corpsmembers earned over $5.00 an hour in their most recent job. Most frequently listed occupations for pre-program jobs included maintenance work, laborer, fast food work, stock clerk, sales clerk, and gardening.

The majority of corpsmembers entering the program between September and November 1982 came from blue-collar family backgrounds. Only 8% of the entering corpsmembers had fathers in professions such as doctor, lawyer, or engineer. Most commonly listed fathers' occupations were craftsman, operative and service worker. Of corpsmembers who reported occupations of their fathers, 60% listed blue-collar occupations. Most commonly reported mothers' occupations included homemaker, clerical work, service work, sales, and nursing. The entering corpsmembers also came from fairly large families, 43% from families with five or more children.

The intake survey also included questions on occupational aspirations of entering corpsmembers and their reasons for joining the CCC. The majority of the entering corpsmembers plan to go on to blue-collar occupations. Of those responding to the question, 66% indicate aspirations for a blue collar career. A third (31%) specifically listed an occupation that is conservation-related. The most frequently listed reasons for joining the CCC included the need for a job or for money, the need to gain experience or to learn a skill, or the desire to improve themselves or to take on a challenge.

In summary, the responses to the intake survey indicate that even though the CCC program may not be strictly targeted on the

economically disadvantaged, it is, in fact, serving a segment of the youth population which is not particularly "advantaged." Over half of entering participants had not completed regular high school. A large proportion had not worked in the last six months. Those who had worked were in predominantly low-skill jobs such as maintenance work, laborer, fast-food work, and gardening. Most appeared to come from blue collar backgrounds, many of them from rather large families.

Retention and attrition

These are also issues on which more information must be gathered, since high attrition rates can potentially reduce programmatic and cost effectiveness. Gross numbers are available from a study the CCC conducted of four classes that entered during a four month period of 1979-80. In that limited sample, 29 percent dropped out during the three-week introductory program at the Training Academy. Of those who completed Academy training and were placed in the field, 42 percent stayed for six months and 23 percent of the same group stayed for the full year and graduated. (The proportions were comparable with averages from the year 1980 as a whole.) Analysis of the "whys" of attrition in the four classes disclosed the following:

- Women had a higher retention rate than men.
- Whites had higher retention rates than Blacks.
- Corpsmembers with a high school diploma were more likely to stay and to graduate.
- Males from metropolitan counties and females from rural or non-metropolitan counties were more likely to remain in the program; these trends were more pronounced for Blacks and Hispanics, less for Whites.

The CCC study of classes in 1980 also included a tabulation of reasons for leaving the Corps while at the Training Academy, during the first six months, and during the second six months.

Overall, 35-40 percent of corpsmembers left the CCC for "positive" reasons, including graduation (22%), jobs and/or military service (9%), school (3%) and medical (3%). The experience of men and women was, however, very different: 47 percent of women had positive separations, as compared with 32 percent of the men.

The most common negative reasons for leaving the Corps were "could not adjust" (13%) and drugs/alcohol (12%), but again the male-female differences were marked: drugs/alcohol (male 14% and female 8%), AWOL (7% and 4%), insubordination (4% to 2%) and fighting/violence (4% and 1%).

Reasons for separation also varied during the three phases of the program (Academy, 6 months, 12 months). During the Academy phase, more than half the enrollees dropped out because of a general inability to adjust to the program and its demands. During the first six months, these issues declined in importance and a wider range of problems surfaced, including drugs, jobs and violation of center policies. For Hispanics, personal adjustment and family problems persisted into the first six months.

During the last six months, pursuit of employment became a more common reason for leaving the Corps for all members except Blacks, among whom drug-alcohol abuse, fighting/violence and AWOL remained principal reasons for separation.

The most common reasons for dropping out of the academy were "could not adjust/disappointed" (34%), medical (12%), and personal/ family problems (8%). During the first six months, the proportion of those leaving because they could not adjust dropped to 19 percent, drug and alcohol problems arose for 17 percent and 10 percent found jobs. During the final six months, 15 percent found jobs, 12 percent had drug/alcohol problems, 10 percent got tired of the program, 11 percent reported a wide range of problems in no particular category and "could not adjust" virtually disappeared as a reason for leaving.

Male-female variations were apparent: reasons unique to the male top ten reasons for separation were insubordination and stealing; reasons unique to the females, school and medical problems. During the second six months, drug/alcohol abuse became predominantly a male problem.

It should be stressed that attrition from the California CCC and the 5.2 months average length of stay is pretty much in line with comparable programs serving similar segments of the youth population. The average length of stay of participants in the federal YACC program was three months. In the Job Corps, the average stay is seven months in a two year contract, with 15% leaving in the first 30 days. In the U.S. Army, 40% do not complete one year of a three year enlistment. Also, it should be noted that in the original Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930's, the average length of stay was only nine weeks.

Youth Leadership Development

Generally, an individual center has five Crewleaders and five Specialists, mostly former corpsmembers who compete for these positions after four to six months in the Corps. Once selected for such a "Supergrade" position, a corpsmember's contract is extended for one year from promotion and additional training at the Academy is required.

The Crewleaders act as junior staff, assisting in the supervision of corpsmembers at work and during evening ativities. Many

crewleaders have qualified for Civil Service positions in the CCC during the past year -- 99 passed the examination in 1981.

The Specialists are trained in work required to maintain and operate centers -- vehicle maintenance, tool care, cooking, facilities maintenance and nursery operations -- and in two other specialties: 60 Solar Specialists work out of the Corps' Greenwood Solar Center, fabricating and installing solar water heating systems at state facilities; and 45 E-Con Specialists based at the Stockton Energy Center conduct energy audits, weatherize and retrofit state facilities, and conduct energy conservation awareness training at centers.

In recognition of the calibre of Crewleaders and Specialists, the Peace Corps accepts an applicant's qualifications as a CCC "Supergrade" in lieu of a college degree.

V. ADMINISTRATION

Experienced evaluators agree that the critical ingredient of any good program is the quality of leadership and staff. The CCC experience certainly bears this out. As we have mentioned, a great deal of its success can be traced to the leadership of B.T. Collins and Jack Dugan in rebuilding the program and establishing its high standards of professionalism and productivity. Their leadership has also been marked by an ability to select, motivate and creatively supervise a dedicated and competent staff both at headquarters and in the centers.

By and large, the key staff is young, energetic and personally devoted to achieving the objectives and maintaining the standards set by the CCC leadership.

Among the outstanding staff interviewed, here are but a few profiles:

- Robert J. Burkhardt, Jr., Chief Deputy Director: degrees from Columbia, Princeton and Union Graduate School; a plumber, a trumpet player and a juggler prior to joining CCC, he still performs part-time with the Pickle Family Circus. As intense and energetic as he is versatile, Burkhardt spent his six years in the CCC in every possible job before moving up to that of Chief Deputy.

- John Oubre, currently director of a new center at Bollinger: B.A. in philosophy, M.A. in public administration; from a large and close family in Louisiana. He has dedicated his work life -- as a priest, high school teacher and counselor in drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs -- to directly serving young people. He, too, is one of the original CCC staff, and has worked at the Academy, in the recruitment program at headquarters, as director of two centers and, now, starting a new center.

- Patrick Couch, Director of the Del Norte Center: former probation officer, family counselor and law student, who found these occupations "too dry," and was disillusioned with how "the system" deals with youth. He finds the "family concern" of the CCC just right. Married, two sons, lives in his own home near the center.

- Martha Diepenbrock: following a short stay at the University of California/Santa Cruz, she became an organizer for the Farmworkers Union and had a major role in organizing the Modesto March in 1973. A staff member of the CCC since 1978, she co-directed a fire center, set up two new centers and is now at

CCC headquarters directing the programs in career development, corps member education and recruitment of women.

The style of such staff members, and the tone of all staff interactions observed during the field visits, is highly reminiscent of the Peace Corps and the hey-day of the War on Poverty of the mid-1960's. The staff is serious about building competence, excellence, tough-mindedness; they quote liberally from Martin Luther King, Thoreau, politicians, philosophers and poets; they speak enthusiastically of "mission," "purpose," "dedication." Nobody smirks when such words are mentioned. Staff meetings are characterized by a spate of irreverant humor, challenges by staff of official pronouncements, arguments over principle and practice -- but above all, one is struck by the atmosphere of mutual respect.

The total staff is 452: 106 at headquarters and the remainder in the 26 centers. Headquarters staff includes a director, a chief deputy or operating officer, and three deputy directors: one for field operations (to whom three regional directors and, through them, 26 center directors report); one for program development (who oversees a project planning unit, a legislative and public relations unit, and a corpsmember development unit); and one for administration.

Most centers have a director and two chief "deputies" (Civil Service positions called Conservationist II). One is in charge of project and work site development and one is responsible for in-center life. There are also a business services officer, two cooks, two clerks and a number of Conservationist I's who supervise crews and work in evening activities. Many of these are former corpsmembers. The Fire Centers have a different management structure and require two directors -- a Chief Ranger from the Department of Forestry who is in charge of training and work projects; and a CCC director who is responsible for in-center life.

Center directors are given a great deal of latitude, within the strictures of the Corps' inviolable rules, to operate their own centers. Sacramento encourages creativity and notes are compared at staff meetings so that directors may profit from each others' experience.

The success of the decentralized administrative mode is founded on the mutual respect that exists between center directors and headquarters staff members who, for the most part, were, themselves, center directors at one time. Directives from headquarters are often discussed with staff before they are formulated. But even when they are not -- when new requirements for standardization and uniformity are insisted upon (as is the case with the new emphasis on employability development, for instance) -- center directors respond, in the knowledge that their views will ultimately be solicited and heard.

Future Administrative Issues

After six years of operation with the strong personal support of Governor Brown, the impending change in state leadership may have some impact on Corps leadership. Many of the top CCC staff have been with the Corps for five or six years, have maintained a "burn-out" pace, and may, themselves, soon be ready for a change. Given the crucial contribution they have made to the Corps' success, changes at the helm could have substantial impact.

Other, internal, issues will also be faced during the next years. They include:

- Unionization: Corps "middle management," all positions between crew leader and top management are now included in a public employee bargaining unit. The introduction of union membership and rules to a staff that has hitherto worked out of a larger sense of "mission" can be expected to affect worker attitudes to some extent.

- Expansion: Plans to increase enrollment from 1800 to 2400 and ultimately to 3000 in fiscal 1985 have serious implications for CCC activities. Current plans call for accomplishment of the expansion as follows: establishment of three new residential centers for 60 corpsmembers each, and two new non-residential centers for 70 corpsmembers each; creation of a 52-member "backcountry" crew operating out of an existing center; expansion of eight centers from 60 to 80 corpsmembers each; assignment of 48 corpsmembers to Forestry Department "Helitack" teams (quick-attack helicopter firefighting).

  This 60 percent increase in the scale of CCC will inevitably have bureaucratic and logistical consequences as new staff are hired, span of control expands and new facilities are developed. In addition, any increase in non-residential centers will tend to reduce the opportunities for the intense interaction among corpsmembers of different socio-economic, ethnic and racial groups that CCC staff feel is such an important aspect of the program's impact on youth. Non-residential programs will also tend to be established in urban areas and thus may de-emphasize the conservation and forest-fire-fighting emphasis of the program.

VI. THE CCC VIS-A-VIS OTHER YOUTH CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

In comparing the California program with the federal Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC) projects and individual state programs, some variations are of interest.

- Although most of the programs do not target recruitment on the disadvantaged, YACC and most state programs report special efforts to recruit minority and disadvantaged youth. Nevertheless, the proportions of minority youths and high school drop outs are similar: YACC 28 percent minorities, CCC 34 percent; YACC 41 percent drop outs, CCC 46 percent. Since the CCC does not record the socio-economic status of corpsmembers, there is no data to compare with the fact that 39 percent of YACC enrollees were disadvantaged. State programs based in urban areas have much higher proportions of minority and disadvantaged youths. And in Iowa, the year-round program for in-school youth is limited to disadvantaged and handicapped young people.

- In addition to a common emphasis on educational and employability development, the YACC programs included some on-the-job training and limited post-program counseling and placement assistance. Development of programming in this area is not very far along at the CCC.

- YACC projects did not include an orientation phase such as the CCC provides at its Academy, nor did it emphasize physical fitness to the extent found in California. The federal programs were also primarily non-residential and operated under less strict disciplinary codes. Independent state programs, operating or planned, are more like the YACC than the CCC in these aspects.

- The Arkansas and Minnesota YACC programs viewed themselves primarily as providing jobs. In these states, youngsters participated primarily as a step toward employment and were encouraged to prepare for and find jobs as soon as they were ready. Only enrollees in a residential program in Minnesota who were actively interested in a conservation career were encouraged to stay for the full year.

- The Massachusetts YACC program allotted single YACC positions to public agencies to assist in special projects and programs, such as the preparation of a statewide forestry plan, research projects in the Division of Marine fisheries, and marketing work for forestry products in the Bureau of Forestry. These

projects provided specialized training and supervision in developing professional job skills.

- Maryland's YACC program was distinguished by an emphasis on urban projects and the enrollment of a large proportion of minority and disadvantaged youths. Its director, Joe Friend, said that targeting "did not appear to hurt the program." It was very successful, he said, because "there was a lot of work to be done. The kids responded to this. They were doing work that they could see was accomplishing something."

- A unique aspect of the currently-pending proposal in New York is use of on-the-job training in residential sites as an incentive for good performance. Assignment to such sites will be limited to enrollees with good records in non-residential programs and special interest in conservation work. Three-quarters of the program will be non-residential.

VII. THE IMPACT

Impact on Youth

CCC estimates of the impact of its program on youth are primarily impressionistic. According to CCC staff, members of the California legislature, work providers, residents of areas where the Corps has worked and reports from program graduates themselves, the Corps provides its members with just the qualities employers are seeking: positive attitudes toward work and a capacity to work hard, interest in cooperation and learning, and, for employers involved in conservation or energy-related work, basic skills.

The Corps has collected numerous "success stories" of former corpsmembers who have secured jobs in public agencies and the private sector, jobs that their holders report they could not have held before their experience in the CCC.

And the 115 corpsmembers who responded to a survey conducted in 1981 rated the CCC most highly in building their self-confidence, providing skills and experience, and increasing their ability to express themselves.

Other results of that survey, which are cited by the CCC in response to questions about the program's impact on the employment of participants, are not substantial enough to report here. Fully aware of the need for a careful, random, controlled study of CCC impact, the Corps hopes such research will be conducted in the near future.

Economic Impact

A study of the economic impact of CCC programs was conducted by Public Interest Economics-West in 1979. By all accounts the CCC has become even better managed and more efficient over the past three years. Thus, while dated, one can review these findings with reasonable assurance that the value of benefits, if accurate in the first place, are likely to have changed, if at all, for the better three years later.

The study assessed the economic value of CCC conservation projects, the impact of the program on corpsmember earnings and the cost-effectiveness of the total program.

- The value of CCC conservation work was conservatively estimated at $14.75 million in 1978/79, but the report declares that the true value of the work could be two or three times greater if it were possible to take the following "intangibles" into consideration: the market value of environmental enhancement; reduced costs for welfare, unemployment and crime; improved citizenship, potentially crea-

tive leadership, more responsible lifestyles and better health on the part of corpsmembers.

- Preliminary studies of two sample groups of former corpsmembers yielded an estimate of increased earnings at an average rate of $1,671 each, or about $3.31 million, per year attributable to the program.

- The value of capital improvements to state-owned CCC centers made by corpsmembers was estimated at $1.36 million per year.

- The total annual benefits thus derived -- $19.42 million -- when offset against adjusted yearly per-corpsmember expenditures totalling $16.19 million ($14,270 each*) yield an overall cost/benefit ratio of 1:1.20. Program benefits were found to equal about $3.2 million more than costs in 1978/79.

The study also attempted to determine whether CCC crews are as efficient as those of other agencies and the private sector, and found they compared favorably. Sponsoring agencies appraised the value of CCC work on several projects at an average of $8.16 an hour, while Economics-West estimated the alternative cost of having the work done by non-CCC labor at $8.73 an hour. The research report contends that this difference in efficiency is not significant since the sample was small and the agency estimates of value were incomplete.

**See below.

---

*This figure subtracts from the CCC estimate of cost per-corpsmember the following: the salaries of forest rangers who co-direct the eight Fire Centers (these salaries would continue to be paid by the Department of Forestry in the absence of the CCC program); $1.55 million spent on vehicles and tools during the study year, the cost of which were amortized over five and two years respectively for purposes of cost analysis; the lease payments made by the CCC to another state agency for otherwise vacant facilities.

**As this case study was about to be printed, P/PV received from CCC a copy of a preliminary cost-benefit study conducted by its staff economist in response to a legislative mandate. The figures, which we have not had time to analyze, relate to the fiscal year 1981-82. Though the numbers are much larger than those in the 1979 report, the findings are comparable: total value of the Corps public service conservation work, $46.78; total training benefits attributable to the Corps, $8.8 million; total annual benefits thus derived, $55.59 million, offset by total net costs of $35.50 million, for an overall cost benefit ratio of 1:1.61. Program benefits exceeded costs by $21 million in 1981-82.

VIII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A major problem facing any CCC evaluation is establishing a clear definition of its objectives, a necessary prerequisite to assessing how well it achieves them. The legislation establishing the CCC speaks broadly to several public works objectives and human development goals. But is it primarily a youth leadership program? a youth employment program? a training program? or a public works program for the State of California? Although "the conservation and preservation of our natural environment," and "a disciplined work force for the State of California" were commonly stressed as objectives in a number of discussions with various CCC staff, each interviewee provided a markedly different emphasis.

Objectives notwithstanding, it is relatively easy to identify the ingredients of CCC success, when success is measured in terms of general popularity, longevity, continued funding during a time of budget strictures, and the health that is signalled by continuing growth and change in a thriving program.

To the degree that the CCC is a success, in these not-inconsiderable terms, that success is probably attributable to a number of elements, including some combination of the following:

1. Special interest and enthusiastic support of the chief elected official; from the beginning, former Governor Jerry Brown provided both personal and political support for the CCC.

2. Strong bipartisan support from the legislature, whose members are made aware by their constituents (and by the Corps) of the CCC work done in their districts.

3. High public visibility of the CCC work -- especially during fire, flood, and, most recently, the Medfly emergencies -- which the staff uses for unusually effective public relations.

4. High quality CCC leadership and staff characterized by zeal, dedication and professionalism at all levels and sustained through continuity, promotion from within and delegation of authority to the field.

5. An emphasis on high-quality production tempered by the staff's devotion to teaching, respectful attitudes toward corpsmembers and an understanding of constructive discipline.

6. Activity that appeals to the desire of young people to do meaningful, physically challenging, real, environmental protection and conservation work.

7. Optimal size of centers (60) for good interaction and good supervision. (NOTE: our experience suggests the number is just right.)

8. Optimal age, 18-23; not too young (CCC experimented with 16-17 year olds from YACC and generally found them too immature for mutual and full benefit), and yet young enough to thrive in "miserable conditions." CCC staff also note that opening the program to younger persons would encourage early school leaving and risk violating child labor law limitations on fire fighting and power tool use.

9. Luck. CCC staff joke about this, but note that every time something goes wrong for the program, fate intervenes with a person (Collins is one example) or a project (a natural disaster or a well-handled emergency in a key legislator's district, for example) that saves the day.

CCC officials themselves would place the Corps' non-targeting policy near the top of this list. Mr. Dugan identifies it as "critical to our success," the element without which constructive interaction -- "each one teach one" -- could not take place. From a public policy point of view this may, if true, be one of the more important things to be learned from the CCC. But given the high attrition rate in a population that includes a good number of non-disadvantaged young people, and the fact that some targeted programs (including P/PV's own Ventures in Community Improvement) achieve substantial success, this observer for now must reserve judgement on this issue.

Impact Issues

Judgement must also be reserved on the issues of attrition and the CCC's effect on corpsmembers' employability.

Historically, the Corps' high rate of attrition is accepted and defined as "healthy" by Corps officials, since it weeds out "unready" young people who cannot profit from the Corps' orientation and discipline. Corps officials define program standards and performance, not attrition rates, as key measures of program success. Surviving in the CCC is equated with "toughness," a considerable virtue in the CCC lexicon, and staying the course is a status symbol.

But of late there has been a muting of this position. With public funding an ever increasing concern, awareness that high attrition rates increase program costs substantially has been sharpened. And with the CCC finally stabilized as a public agency and operating even more productively, more and more attention is being paid to what works better for the corpsmembers.

As a result, CCC leadership is taking a new position, that the "positive termination" rate of 35-40 percent should be higher. "I don't want anyone to leave CCC unless there's a job, school, or someplace better to go to," Mr. Dugan said. To this end, they are considering better ways of making the Corps' expectations clearer to recruits from the start, strengthening the job development program, and increasing corpsmember participation in decisions that affect their lives. Recently, for example, a policy change was made in response to corpsmember wishes to permit a transfer to different centers after four, rather than six, months in the program.

The new emphasis on career and job development is marked. A recent analysis of attrition rates by center disclosed a correlation between centers putting the most emphasis on career development and those experiencing lower attrition rates. Each center has therefore been requested to push more vigorously a program based on a detailed curriculum developed by CCC headquarters. It includes eight hours of mandated instruction before graduation, covering work values, vocational interests and skills identification, career awareness and job-seeking techniques. Corpsmembers are encouraged to apply for jobs on a regular basis while still in the Corps. Actual job announcements are used for training sessions, prospective employers speak at evening meetings, and center staff keep in touch with local Chambers of Commerce, service clubs and business associations to publicize the desirability of corpsmembers as employees. Recently Jack Dugan has begun meeting with employers around the State to explore further employment avenues for CCC graduates.

What impact this new CCC emphasis on future employment will have is not yet known. Some information is being collected on a systematic basis from former corpsmembers, but this data must be analyzed, and further research remains to be done. To that end, P/PV is currently working informally with CCC staff on plans for the design and funding of a long-term impact study.

Although the present case study has been more descriptive than analytical and necessarily eschews evaluation, it should be clear that this observer believes the CCC to be a productive, well-run youth program that deserves both the support it has received in California and a closer look by policymakers and program operators around the country.

APPENDIX I -- CHARACTERISTICS OF CCC ENTRANTS, FALL 1982

The CCC program is an untargeted youth program, that is, it does not consider a youth's education, income, or employment status in the selection of participants. Nevertheless, it is important in assessing the program to determine exactly what type of youth are served by the program. In particular, it is important to discern what proportions of individuals attracted to the program are pre-college youth from middle-class families or non-college youth from working class or poor families who characteristically have fewer alternative employment opportunities open to them. To supplement information from CCC administrative data, P/PV devised a questionnaire that was given to three groups of incoming corpsmembers at the Training Academy during the months of September, October, and November of 1982. The total sample size of the survey was 830 out of 862 entering corpsmembers.

Of the 830 in the full sample, 66% were male and 34% female. The average age was about 19.5 for both men and women. The majority were white (59%) with substantial minorities of blacks (17%) and Hispanics (13%). Corpsmembers came from relatively large families with an average of about five children.

Table 1 presents data on high school degree status of entering corpsmembers, Table 2 on high school curriculum, Table 3 on average high school grades, and Table 4 on post-high-school education.

Table 1
High School Degree
Status of Entering Corpsmembers

	Frequency	Proportion
High School Degree	348	44%
G.E.D.	86	11%
Neither	352	45%
Total	786	100%
Non-respondents	44	

Table 2
High School Curriculum
of Entering Corpsmembers

	Frequency	Proportion
Academic	124	17%
Commercial	40	6%
General	473	66%
Vocational/Technical	56	8%
Combination	21	3%
Total	714	100%
Non-respondents	116	

Table 3
Average High School Grades
of Entering Corpsmembers

	Frequency	Proportion
A	22	3%
B+	93	12%
B	208	27%
C+	184	24%
C	216	28%
D	44	6%
E/F	10	1%
Total	778	100%
Non-respondents	52	

Table 4
Previous Enrollment in Junior Colleges,
Four-Year Colleges and Technical Schools
of Entering Corpsmembers

	Frequency	Proportion
Junior or Community College	176	21%
Four-Year College	18	2%
Both Junior and Four-Year College	5	1%
Technical School	74	9%
Total	273	32%

As is evident from the above tables, entering corpsmembers do not, for the most part, come from the "pre-college" population. Only 44% of the youth have a regular high school degree, 11% have a G.E.D., and 45% have neither. Only 17% of the youth came from the academic curriculum in high school, and 66% came from the general curriculum. (Previous educational research has shown that over 80% of high school dropouts come from the general curriculum.) Only 3% of the youth report having had an A average in high school. About 35% report having had a C average or lower. About two thirds have not attended any post high school educational institution, while 32% have.

Table 5 presents data on time since previous job of entering corpsmembers, Table 6 on wages of corpsmembers at their most recent job, and Table 7 on occupations of corpsmembers at their most recent pre-program job.

Table 5
Time Since Last Job
of Entering Corpsmembers

	Frequency	Proportion
No pre-program job	92	12%
One month or less	188	25%
Two months	92	12%
Three months	71	9%
Four months	47	6%
Five months	35	5%
Six months	18	2%
More than six months	201	27%
Total	748	100%
Non-respondents	82	
Mean	25 weeks	
S.D.	28 weeks	

Table 6
Wages of Entering Corpsmembers
at Their Most Recent Pre-Program Job

	Frequency	Proportion
No pre-program job	92	12%
Less than $3.35	66	9%
$3.35 (minimum wage)	153	21%
$3.36-$3.99	132	18%
$4.00-$4.99	126	17%
$5.00-$5.99	84	11%
$6.00-$9.99	74	10%
$10.00 and over	7	1%
Total	737	100%
Non-respondents	93	
Mean wage	$4.30	
S.D.	$1.70	

As the tables indicate, entering corpsmembers had relatively limited and low-paying recent job opportunities. Roughly 12 percent had never worked before the program and 28% reported no job within six months prior to entry. Forty-two percent of the entrants had pre-program jobs that paid the minimum wage or lower, or had never worked. Only 11% of entering corpsmembers earned over $6.00 an hour in their most recent pre-program job. Most pre-program jobs were in unskilled occupations, such as maintenance work and janitor, laborer, short-order cook, fast food worker, stock clerk, sales clerk, dishwasher, cashier, landscaping/gardening, and clerical work. A small proportion of entering corpsmembers listed the Job Corps or the military as their most recent work experience.

Table 7
Occupation of Entering
Corpsmembers at Their Most
Recent Pre-Program Job

	Frequency	Proportion
No pre-program job	92	12%
Maintenance/janitor	58	7%
Fast-food worker	58	7%
Laborer	40	5%
Short-order cook	32	4%
Stock clerk	30	4%
Sales clerk	28	3%
Cashier	27	3%
Dishwasher	27	3%
Landscaping/gardening	22	3%
Clerical	21	3%
Waiter/waitress	16	2%
Factory worker	16	2%
Job Corps	15	2%
Housekeeper/hotel maid	14	2%
Nurse's aide	13	2%
Busboy	11	1%
Machine operator	11	1%
Mechanic trainee	10	1%
Shipper/receiver	10	1%
Painter	9	1%
Military	9	1%
Carpenter's helper	9	1%
Security guard	9	1%
Warehouse work	9	1%
Truck driver	9	1%
Construction work	9	1%
Other	173	22%
Total	787	100%
Non-respondents	43	

The survey also included questions on mother's and father's occupation. The results suggest that corpsmembers come from a variety of backgrounds, but that most of the fathers (60%) worked in blue-collar occupations. Only 8% of entering corpsmembers had fathers in high-paying professions such as doctor, lawyer, or engineer. Most commonly listed father's occupations were craftsmen, operatives, and service workers. The most frequently mentioned occupation for mothers was homemaker. Other commonly reported mother's occupations included clerical work, service work, sales, and nursing.

Finally, the intake survey included questions on occupational aspirations of entering corpsmembers and reasons why they joined the CCC. Table 8 summarizes the responses to the latter question.

Table 8
Why Entering Corpsmembers
Joined the CCC

	Frequency	Proportion
Need job/money	120	17%
Need experience/learn a skill	102	15%
To improve self/ a challenge	101	15%
Like the outdoors	65	9%
Wanted a change/ nothing else to do	61	9%
To learn a conservation-related skill	50	7%
Need place to live/get away from home	48	7%
To do good/preserve forests	18	3%
To fight forest fires	12	2%
Combination of needed a job and other reasons	11	2%
Other or unclear	99	15%
Total	702	100%
Non-respondents	120	

Responses to the question on occupational aspirations suggest that most entering corpsmembers plan to go on to blue-collar jobs. Of those answering the question, 66% indicate aspirations for a blue-collar occupation. About 30% specifically list an occupation that is conservation-related. As far as reasons for joining the CCC, most frequently listed responses include the need for a job or for money, the need to gain experience or learn a skill, or the desire to improve oneself or to take on a challenge.

In summary, the responses to the intake survey indicate that even though the CCC program may not be strictly targeted on the economically disadvantaged, it is serving a segment of the youth population which characteristically has limited opportunities. Over half of the entering participants had dropped out of regular high school, over 60% come from the general curriculum in high school, and 35% had been C students or lower. A large proportion of the youth served by the program have not worked in the last six months. Those that have worked have been predominantly in low-skill jobs such as maintenance work, laborer, fast-food work, and gardening. Most of the youth appear to come from blue-collar backgrounds, many of them from rather larger families.